(b) how much funds were spend during the first two years (2005-07) of the Bharat Nirman Scheme and in physical terms how many villages have been provided with road connectivity; and

(c) whether Government will ensure adequate availability of funds for rural road connectivity programme for the coming year and improved utilization of such funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rs. 11,404.66 crore (Rupees eleven thousand four hundred four crore and sixty six lakhs) was spent during the years 2005-06 and 2006-07 under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. During this period (2005-07), 13831 habitations were connected through all weather roads under Bharat Nirman.

(c) All efforts are being made to ensure adquate availability of funds for rural road connectivity programme for the coming years and also to ensure improved utilization of such funds. Additional funds have been mobilized from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank as well as from the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in order to augment availability of funds for this programme.

Motivation for bio-fuel plants in Maharashtra

989. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the number of farmers encouraged and motivated for the cultivation of bio-fuel plants like Jatropha in Maharashtra in wastelands and how much money has been released as motivational fund to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): As of now, Central funds have not been released to Maharashtra as motivational fund to encourage and motivate farmers for the cultivation of bio-fuel plants like Jatropha.

Land reforms policy

990. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that 25 thousands protesters from over 15 States marched to Delhi, called JANADESH PADYATRA organized by EKTA PARISAD from Gwalior on 2nd October which reached the capital on 28th October, 2007 demanding early announcement of Government's land reforms policy;

(b) if so, the main demands of the protesters indicating reasons for delay in implementation thereof; and

(c) by when Government is expected to come out with clear cut land reforms policy including speedy disposal of land dispute cases, distribution of land to eligible persons and updating/computerization of land records in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir, Government are aware that a 'Janadesh- 2007 Yatra' organized by the Ekta Parishad reached Delhi on 28.10.2007. The demands of the protesters, *inter-alia,* included setting up of a Land Commission; land reforms-related issues, including lowering of ceiling, registration of tenancy, etc, improvements in the systems of disposal of land-related court cases; better management of the process of updating of land records and single-window system at the tehsil level.

It has been decided by Government of India to constitute a "Committee on State Agrarian Relations and the Unfinished Task in Land Reforms" under the Chairmanship of Minister for Rural Development and a "National Council for Land Reforms" under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The composition, terms of reference etc. of the Committee and the Council are being finalized.

Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme in U.P. and Uttarakhand

991. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is running a Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) Programme in States like Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand since the last decade, or so;

(b) if so, how many villages have successfully been covered under this scheme so far;

(c) whether the villagers and rural based NGOs are actively involved in the planning, construction and operation of their water delivery system; and

(d) whether Government will cover far-flung villages in tribal and backward districts in other States like Vidarbha region of Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) Government of India has two Centrally Sponsored Schemes, namely Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) to supplement the efforts of the State Government for providing water supply and sanitation services in rural areas. Each State Government, including Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, is competent to plan, sanction, implement and execute rural water supply and sanitation schemes from the funds provided under ARWSP and CRSP.

(b) As on 1.4.2007, as per ARWSP norms for coverage there are 2, 57,385 Fully Covered (FC) and 1,722 Partially Covered (PC) habitations in Uttar Pradesh. In Uttarakhand, there are 12,852 FC and 5,077 PC habitations in the State. All 70 districts in Uttar Pradesh and 13 districts in Uttarakhand have been covered under Total Sanitation Campaign.

(c) Since the State Government are empowered to plan sanction, execute and implement the water supply schemes, the involvement of villagers and rural based NGOs in the planning, construction and operation of their water delivery systems has been left to the State Governments to decide. TSC guidelines permit engagement of NGOs and Voluntary Organizations in TSC projects for various activities. However, their engagement is decided by the respective project implementing agencies in the States.

(d) Drinking Water supply is one of the six components of Bharat Nirman which has been conceived as a plan to be implemented in four years, from 2005-06 to 2008-09 for building rural infrastructure in all parts of the country under which all uncovered and slipped-back habitations are to be covered and water quality problem is to be addressed.

Wasteland Development Programme in Maharashtra

992. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that wasteland Development Programme is being implemented by Government for non-forest wasteland development;

(b) If so, details thereof;

(c) The wasteland developed so far in the State of Maharashtra and proposed to be done by 2008-09; and